

December 5, 2011

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, U.S. Senators Bob Casey (D-PA) and Pat Toomey (R-PA) and Congressmen Tim Murphy (R-PA), Mike Doyle (D-PA), Bill Shuster (R-PA), Jason Altmire (D-PA) and Mark Critz (D-PA) announced that the long awaited Moon Township Commissary project can move forward without delay.

"This has been a long, tough fight but our retirees and service members in Southwest Pennsylvania will not need to travel 400 miles to get to the nearest commissary," Senator Casey said. "The bottom line is that it is now a certainty that Southwestern Pennsylvania will get a newly constructed first-class commissary to serve our first-rate eligible retirees and military community, and I'll be monitoring the progress very closely to make sure work gets started as soon as possible."

"I strongly support the Defense Department's decision to establish a new commissary in Southwestern Pennsylvania," Senator Toomey said. "For many months, my staff and I have been working with other members of Congress and the Defense Department to move the project forward. This long-overdue decision is vital for the welfare of our service members and military retirees in the area. I look forward to working with the Pennsylvania delegation to ensure the new facility is completed in time to maintain continuous service for these great Americans."

"Our new commissary has been a long time coming for the families of the 168,000 veterans, reservists, and active-duty soldiers in our region who have given so much in service to our country," Congressman Murphy said. "This announcement has been six years in the making, and I applaud the teamwork displayed by the military, civilian community, and elected officials who made this possible. The odds were against us in the beginning, but by working together and fighting for the money needed to build a new facility we are one step closer to breaking ground on the Coraopolis commissary."

"We've been working since the BRAC Commission started to ensure that the eligible veterans and military personnel in southwestern Pennsylvania continue to have decent access to a commissary facility," Congressman Doyle said. "It's great that we've now cleared this last major hurdle."

"For the past six years, the Pennsylvania delegation has worked in unison to bring this project from the drawing board into reality," Congressman Shuster said. "I am pleased to see that we have passed the final hurdle and we are one great step closer to constructing the commissary in Southwestern Pennsylvania. This project will improve the lives and welfare of countless veterans and military families in our region. Today's news shows that the delegation is unified when it comes to our military families and our veterans in Pennsylvania."

"The entire Pennsylvania delegation has been united in our efforts to secure this new commissary for western Pennsylvania," Congressman Altmire said. **"Our servicemen and women deserve the best when they return home. This new, first-class facility will deliver the much-needed services veterans need without forcing them to travel hours out of their way. I look forward to closing out this project with the rest of our delegation and ensuring its timely completion."**

"This project has been six years in the making, and it's finally here," said Congressman Critz. "Clearing this last procedural hurdle is not only a victory for our military community, but for our veterans and the veterans groups that have fought hard to see this project through."

In 2005, the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) identified the Charles E. Kelly Support Facility (CEKSF) in Oakdale for closure. Closing the facility meant that 168,000 eligible military personnel and veterans lost Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) operations as well as the Commissary, Post Exchange, and Military Clothing Sales Store (MCSS) services that they had come to rely on.

Over many years, members of the previous and current delegation took numerous steps to see the project become a reality, including fighting to keep the facility open, securing funds to build a new Commissary, and fighting to get final authorization for the project from the Department of Defense. The delegation remembers the work of Senator Specter and the late Congressman Murtha who were vitally important to the success of the project.

The delegation expects the Department of Defense to quickly take action to ensure there is no gap in coverage after the CEKSF commissary closes and the Moon facility opens. Senator Casey also received confirmation earlier this year that the Army and Air Force Exchange Services (AAFES) have committed to construct a Post Exchange, which will include a

compliment of exchange services, adjacent to the commissary. With the construction of the commissary and upcoming Post Exchange, these MWR services that were victims of the BRAC process have now been preserved for the military families and eligible retirees for the tri-state region."